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TIMES-VIRGINIAN

A LIVELY WEEKLY NEWSPAPER AT HISTORIC APPOMATTOX COURTHOUSE, VIRGINIA

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This Saturday in Appomattox

Festival set to go

All systems are go for the 12th annual Historic Appomattox Railroad Festival, to be celebrated this Saturday and Sunday in the town of Appomattox.

The festival, which each year attracts thousands of visitors to Appomattox, will begin at 10 a.m. Saturday morning with the traditional parade, through town and before the review stand on Main Street.

Henry Fulcher from WFLO radio station in Farmville will serve as head conductor, announcing the parade entries as they pass. Dr. Betty J. Diener, secretary of commerce and resouces for the Commonwealth of Virginia, will serve as parade grand marshal.

At approximately 11 a.m., formal ceremonies will be held at the Main Street depot, where guests will be honored and parade trophies will be awarded.

Bleachers will be available along Main Street for the elderly and the handicapped, and parking areas will be provided for handicapped people.

A variety of arts and crafts, as well as antiques will be on display at the Main Street depot on Saturday and Sunday. In addition, country cooking will be available at booths from church and civic organizations at Main and Lee Streets, across from the depot.

A "We Have it Made in Virginia" section will also be featured at this year's festival. It will include products made in Virginia which do not fit into the arts and crafts category.

At 1 p.m., Saturday, a fireman's competition will take place on the lot across from Memorial Methodist Church on Court Street. Also at 1 p.m., the Joe Sweeney 10-kilometer footrace will begin at Appomattox County High School.

All-day music will begin with the Bourbon Street Beat Band at noon at the depot.

A variety of exhibits ranging from Civil War memorabilia to miniature trains will be featured along Main Street and at Courthouse Square.

The Courthouse Square will also be the site of the various "Good Ole Days" exhibits, with traditional crafts and foods.

Uatha "Buddy" Hudson will give a break-dancing demonstration between 3 p.m. and 3:30 at the festival Saturday.

A fireworks display will begin at approximately 8 p.m.saturday at the Appomattox County High School parking lot, and at 8:30 p.m., a street dance will begin on Main Street.

There will be a $1 admission charge for couples, and a $2 charge for singles at the street dance. No alcoholic beverages will be permitted.

The Stonewall Vineyard, north of Concord, will be open for tours for the first time during the Railroad festival on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Another new feature at the festival will be a petting zoo, provided by the Brouchard family of Pamplin.

The "Best Friend of Charleston," a replica of an old-fashioned steam engine, will also be a new feature at this year's festival, as will be the "Railroad Willie Express," a mock train will traverse the streets during the festival. Rides will be available on both.

Other popular features of past festivals which will again be a part of this year's event include helicopter rides, a hot air balloon, games and contests, and a full-contact karate match at 2 p.m. Sunday.

Full details of the festival are outlines in the Depot Journal. A special section inside this week's Times-Virginian.

IT WAS WALL-TO-WALL PEOPLE at the 1983 Historic Appomattox Railroad Festival. Plans for this year's festivities are even bigger and better. Parade begins at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 13. The festivities continue through Sunday, Oct. 14. Complete information on the festival activities may be found in the Depot Journal found inside. (Photo by Allen Austin)

Asherman to speak at chamber event

Charlotte Asherman, Lynchburg television personality with WSET., will be the guest speaker at a dinner meeting for members and guests of the Appomattox County chamber of Commerce on Thursday, Oct. 18 at the Appomattox County High school cafeteria.

A social hour with light refreshments will begin at 6:30 p.m. and dinner will follow at 7 p.m.

A brief business meeting will update members as to chamber activities.

Members are urged to make plans to attend and encouraged to bring a prospective member as your guest. It is important for proper planning that you complete and return, along with your check for $9 per person, your reservation to Appomattox Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 704. Appomattox, Va. 24522.

Deadline for registration is Oct. 12.

Zoning choices cited

If a majority of Appomattox County voters vote for zoning on the Nov. 6 ballot, the Appomattox County Board of Supervisors will have a choice of two ways to carry out the mandate -- zoning the total county or partial zoning.

The wording on the ballot asks only "Shall Appomattox County have a zoning ordinance?"

What type of zoning would be left up to the Board of Supervisors, said Supervisor Franklin Vaughan.

Like his two fellow supervisors, Vaughan is not pushing for the county to be zoned, but wants to hear what the citizens think through the Nov. 6 referendum.

Personally, he isn't sure the entire county should be zoned.

"If the voters tell us they want zoning, I think just the built-up portions of the county should be zoned, under partial zoning," Vaughan said.

That could be along U.S. Route 460 and for approximately two miles around the Town of Appomattox, he explained.

The town of Appomattox has had zoning in effect since 1967.

The man who has worked with the Appomattox County Planning Commission at the direction of the Board of Supervisors to prepare draft zoning wording over the past two years said partial zoning might be a compromise for those county residents in the more rural areas who don't want their land to be zoned.

He is William W. Hibbert III, executive director of the Central Virginia Planning District Commission. The CVPDC has provided the staff work to assist the county in preparing a draft zoning ordinance and zoning maps which show both over county zoning and partial zoning possibilities.

Those draft maps will be available for viewing at the four public workshops which will be held for the county's citizens to ask questions about zoning, beginning with the first next Tuesday night at the courthouse.

"Partial zoning would provide protection for property in the areas already under development or soon to be developed," Hibbert said. "That would include the areas around the Town of Appomattox and along U.S. 460."

Appomattox County Planning Commission Chairman Sam Waddell said the draft zoning ordinance is based on the way land is being used right now, as much as possible.

The workshop Tuesday night, Oct. 16, will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the county courthouse. It will be followed by similar workshops in Oakville at the Oakville School on Monday, Oct. 29, the Town of Pamplin City in the Brandy Ann Dress Manufacturing building on Tuesday, Oct. 23, and again in the courthouse on Friday, Oct. 26 for the Cloverhill District.

Flood program noted

Peter C. Myers, Chief, U.S. Soil Conservation Service, (SCS), has authorized assistance for applying conservation in the Upper Appomattox River Watershed.

Flood control dams were determined to be too costly for the projected benefits. Goals for the watershed are now to reduce soil erosion and enhance downstream water quality. These goals will be carried out through long-term contracts with landowners to apply needed conservation to their farmland.

Landowners in the Upper Appomattox River Watershed may apply at the Appomattox SCS/R.E. Lee Conservation District Office.

Farmers who control eligible land that has erosion problems are eligilbe. Leased land is eligible if the farmer has a written lease which covers the length of the contract. Contracts can be written for three to 10 years.

A conservation plan and schedule for applying conservation may be on less than the entire farm, but must cover the entire problem area.

Cost-share funds are available for critical area planting, stripcropping, filter strips, sodwaterways, diversions, conservation tillage and pasture and hayland planting.

Farmers who may be interested are urged to contact SCS for more details.

Willie's 'identity' revealed

Elmer Hampton has one of the most familiar faces at the Historic Appomattox Railroad Festival.

But, few people know what he really looks like.

You see, Hampton is the creator and perpetrator of the "Railroad Willie" character which has become almost synonomous with Appomattox's fall festival.

Elmer, or "Hamp" as most people know him, is a native of southern New Jersey who moved to Appomattox seven years ago.

"I was in heavy construction work, Hamp says. "After two heart attacks and open-heart surgery, my doctor told me I had to stop work."

So, he started looking for a place to retire and saw an ad for a country home in Appomattox County. After visiting the area, he decided that this was the place he would choose to live.

A year after to moving to Appomattox, Hamp created the Railroad Willie character.

"I was in the Oakville Ruritans, and the Railroad Festival committee asked for a volunteer to work on the festival. I was drafted, he notes.

His task was to create a character for cildren to enjoy, one which would fit in with the "railroad" theme for the festival.

Hamp sketched out a face, then took hardware cloth (chicken wire) and paper mache and sculptured the exaggerated features of a quintessential hobo.

Katie Martin of the Oakville Extension Homemakers made the hobo's coat and trousers and when the project was complete, Hamp had created a genuine Appomattox original: "Railroad Willie"

In the six years since the character was created, Hamp say, "I've had a lot of fun during the Railroad Festival."

It's particularly fun when people don't know who's beneath the costume," he add "That makes it a lot easier to be uninhibited."

While playing Railroad Willie character is mostly fun, it is not always easy. The custome weighs 14 pounds and very little air circulates through it, makeing it extremely uncomfortable on hot days.

"It gets rough sometimes," Hamp notes. "After a hot day, you really feel like you've been through it."

Still, Hamp enjoys his time playing the role of a hobo.

"The character was created mostly for kids, and I get a charge out of having fun with the kids, he notes.

He says that the typical reaction of younger children is sheer horror when they see the head. Fop example he has two graddaughters in New Jersey who visit the Railroad Festival each year. "One of them thinks Railroad Willie is great, and the other is frightened of the costume," Hamp notes.

And, the child who likes the character now "couldn't even look at the head with nobody in it without getting frightened at first," Hamp notes.

But, with children being the perceptive creatures that they are, they soon figure out that, despite his grosteque appearance, Railroad Willie means them no harm and wants to be their friend.

"Every year there are six and seven-year-olds who want to take Railroad Willie home to meet their parents and friends," Hamp notes.

Elmer Hampton

Railroad Willie

Marshall takes contest

Two participants in last week's Times-Virginian football contest tied for first place in accurately predicting the outcome of last week's games, Judy Marshall and Curtis T. Mayberry, Sr.

In the tie breaker, where contestants atempt to predict the exact score of two of the contest games, Mayberry came the closest and was declared first place winner. He will receive check in the amount of $20 from the Times-Virginian. Judy Marshall will receive a check in the amount of $10 from the paper.

The contest continues this week in the sports section of the Times-Virginian.

Lions Club meeting planned

The Appomattox County Lions Club will meet on Thursday evening, Oct. 11 at 6:45 in the Country Fare Restaurant.

The program will be conducted by the Lynchburg Peace Education Center.

"It will be an informative program about the nuclear arms freeze movement and its political implications. I would like to encourage all Lions to make plans to attend. I believe you will find it a most interesting and educational program," said Dan Turner, program chairman for the organization.

Father Darkleaf

By CALVIN ROBINSON

Coming up, Big weekend in Appomattox. Twelfth Annual Railroad Festival. We will be looking for YOU, I will be the fellow mingling in the crowd, notepad in hand.

Millions listened to the political debate over TV Sunday night. Who won? The American people won.

In college I was an intercollegiate debator, editor of The Debater and president of the Forensic Council. But, I never won an intercollegiate debate! Maybe there should be more community debates. Last time out and many years ago, with the Rev. Omar Burnette as my partner, lost a debate to the team of the late J. H. O'Brien an George Abbitt, at the Vera school on the relative merits of the dish rag and the broom.

I choose to be neutral in the World Series of Baseball. Comment - thrill of hearing the National Anthem before football or series baseball games, but why not before golf, tennis or basketball?

Latest Virginia highway death total, 736. That is 72 more than same period last year. Does not make sense.

Still reading "over my head," am in the midst of Torquato Tasso's masterpiece, "Jerusalem Delivered." It is a long, long poem on the First Crusade, which began August 15, 1096 and captured Jerusalem in 1099.

Thanks to Mrs. Helen Gunter for a collection of about twenty newspapers from around Myrtle Beach, S.C., all about Hurricane Diana. "Mrs. Gunter was there, with her daughter, Mrs. Frances Rogers. Praise for the Red Cross, which came to the rescue of several thousand of those stranded. Had a T-Shirt which became a survivor's souvenir. Went by Dillon, S.C. and Pedro's South of the Border resort. As Diana approached, arrangements were made to have the local beach newspaper printed in Columbia. The News and Observer, Charleston, S.C., claims to be The South's Oldest Daily Newspaper. Brought me copies of The Sun News, Myrtle Beach Journal, The State, Columbia, S.C.,; The Charlotte, N.C.; The News, The Evening Post, Charleston, S.C., etc. Thanks.

Around town . . . saw a friend mowing his lawn. Behind the riding mower had a rope and was pulling a cart containing small child. Neat.

To help provide more parking space in town this weekend, many town people will elect to walk to the Railroad Festival, leaving more space for visitors. See you there, and thanks for reading.

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